HAER
ILL
50-OTWA,
3-

CHICAGO, BURLINGTON AND QUINCY RAILROAD,
ILLINOIS RIVER BRIDGE
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Ottawa
LaSalle County
Illinois

HAER No. IL-71

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HAER
ILL
50-OTWA,
3-

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CHICAGO, BURLINGTON AND QUINCY RAILROAD, ILLINOIS RIVER BRIDGE
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor

HAER No. IL-71

Location:	I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Crossing the Illinois River Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois UTM: 16 E.345470 N.4578120 Quad: Ottawa
Date of Construction:	1898, 1932 (addition)
Builder:	King Bridge Company
Present Owner:	Burlington Northern Railroad
Significance:	This multi-span, truss railroad bridge was erected in 1898 by the prominent bridge-manufacturing firm of King Bridge Company. A later reconstruction (1932) included a Waddell and Harrington Engineers vertical lift.
Project Information:	The Illinois and Michigan Canal was designated a National Heritage Corridor in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER embarked on an extensive inventory and documentation project of the 100 mile-long corridor. Field work for this project was concluded in 1988. Final editing of the documentation was completed in 1992.
Historian:	Gray Fitzsimons, 1985.

A railroad crossing of the Illinois River at Ottawa has existed since 1871 when the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad leased the line of the Ottawa, Oswego & Fox River Valley Company and began operating a road to Streator, Illinois. One of the nation's prominent late-nineteenth-century bridge manufactures, the King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio, constructed the pin-connected, Pratt, through-truss spans in 1898. With the advent of the Illinois Waterway in the early 1930s, one of the spans was reconstructed with a Waddell and Harrington Engineers vertical lift bridge added. In addition to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad bridge at Ottawa, several other similar vertical lift spans exist across the Illinois River within the Heritage Corridor. Presently the Burlington Northern Railroad owns and operates the bridge.

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Bridge is a multi-span railroad bridge built in 1898 by the King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Three of the bridge's spans are fixed steel Pratt through trusses with pin connections. The main span is a vertical lift, Pratt through truss with pin connections; each span measures approximately 200' in length. (The vertical lift span, of the Waddell and Harrington Engineers type, is probably a ca. 1932 addition.) A number of timber trestle approach spans are located to the north and south. Ashlar sandstone piers support each of the truss spans. The bridge is single tracked.

SOURCES:

W. W. Baldwin, "Corporate History of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company," (manuscript prepared for the U.S. Interstate Commerce Commission, June 30, 1917, available at the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois): 35.

Ottawa, Old and New: A Complete History of Ottawa, Illinois, 1823-1914 (Ottawa, IL: The Republican Times, 1912-1914, reprinted by Bireline Publishing Co., Newell, Iowa, 1984), 37.

State Public Utilities Commission of Illinois, Railroad Map of Illinois, 1916.